

**Submission
No 283**

INQUIRY INTO ANIMAL WELFARE POLICY IN NEW SOUTH WALES

Name: Ms Soo Balbi

Date Received: 26 February 2022

I would like to express my concern that that the proposed Animal Welfare Bill 2022 falls short of community expectations in a number of key areas.

Animals in NSW need laws that will:

- Recognise their sentience and the intrinsic value of animals.
- Establish well-funded and independent compliance and enforcement regimes, free from conflicts of interest through an independent NSW Animal Welfare Authority.
- Stop carving out exemptions for farm animals, allowing continuation of cruel practices such as mulesing of lambs, hot iron branding of cattle, carrying out painful procedures without mandatory pain relief and intensive confinement (such as battery cages and sow stalls).

Particularly to the last point, countries all over the world are phasing out these cruel practices. In not taking steps towards phasing them out in NSW, we are only falling further behind. Australia has recently slipped to a D rating on World Animal Protection's Animal Protection Index, behind such countries as New Zealand, Mexico and Malaysia.

Conversely, I would like to express my support for a number of positive elements in the bill:

- Minimum care requirements for animals, including opportunities to express normal behaviours.
- The expansion of the definition of animals to include cephalopods and decapods (e.g. octopus, squid, lobsters and crabs).
- The inclusion of psychological suffering in the definition of harm to animals.

Please consider that this legislation will impact the welfare of millions of animals across the whole state and is desperately needed, especially as our population grows. It represents a rare opportunity to create change, help bring an end to unnecessary suffering, improve the lives of animals, and bring Australia further up the list in the Animal Protection Index.